لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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Wafa 1354—July 1975

EDITOR
M. G. AHMAD

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the current of religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

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The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers, and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named, with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquires may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to

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It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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The Review of Religions

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A Sura from the Holy Quran (V)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

قل يا ايها الكافرون۔ لا اعبد ما تعبدون ۔ و لا انتم اعبدون ما اعبد ۔ و لا انا عابد ما عبدتم ۔ و لا انتم عابدون ما اعبد لكم دينكم ولى دين ۔

Say, 'O ye disbelievers ! 'I worship not as you worship ; 'Nor do you worship as I worship. 'And I shall not worship that which you worship ; 'Nor will you worship Him Whom I worship'. 'For you your religion, and for me my religion.'

After a discussion of the meanings of the word *Alkafirun*

according to the Arabic language and in the light of the Quranic usage and with reference to the text of the Sura, we now take up the external evidence which prompted the commentators to narrow down and particularise the word *Alkafirun*. Ibni Jarir, Ibni Abi Hatim and Tabrani have narrated on the authority of Ibni Abbas, God be pleased with him, that once the Quraish promised the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, to give him so much wealth that he would become the wealthiest among the Meceans and to give him in marriage any woman he chose. They said to him; 'All this you can have only if you leave off abusing our idols and mentioning them insultingly. If you refuse even this, then we can do only one thing and it is such that it will benefit you and us both'. He said 'What is that'? They said: 'You worship our gods for one year and the next year we promise to worship your God'. He said: 'I cannot give you an answer to this unless God tells me what to do in this regard'. At this revelation came to him: يا ايها الكافرون till the end of Sura."

And also:

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قل افغير الله تامرونى اعبد ايها الجاهلون ـ ولقد اوحى اليك و الى الذين من قبلك لئن اشركت ليحبطن عملك ولتكونن من الخاسرين ـ بل الله فاعبد و كن من الشاكرين .

"Say 'Is it other *gods* than Allah that you bid me worship, O ye ignorant ones'? And verily it has been revealed to thee as unto those before thee: 'If thou attribute partners to God, thy work shall surely go vain and thou shalt certainly be of the loosers.' Aye, worship Allah and be among the thankful." (39 : 65-67)

Again Ibni Jarir has reported in his commentary of the Quran, Ibni Abi Hatim in his Musnad and Ibni al-Anbari in his Musahaf, from Saeed son of Manya, a freed slave of Abu al-Bakhtari,

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that : "Walid bin Mughirah, Asi bin Wail, Aswad bin al-Muttalab and Ummaya bin Khalaf called on the Holy Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be on him. They said to him : 'Muhammad! come let us worship your God and you worship our gods and let us become partners in faith. Thus if the faith we are following proved to be more correct than that you are following you will get a portion out of it. On the other hand if what you are following proved to be better, we will get a portion out of it'. At this God revealed Sura *Alkafirun*."

Abdul Razaq and Ibni Manzar have quoted, in their works, the following tradition from Wahab :

> 'Once Quraish said to the Holy Prophet : 'If you like we will follow you in faith for a year and then you follow our faith for a year'. At this Allah revealed Sura قل يا ايها الكافرون .

Similarly, Abd bin Hameed and Ibnul Manzar have reported from Ibni Abbas : "The Quraish said to the Holy Prophet ; 'If you accept our gods then we are prepared to worship your God'. At this Allah revealed the entire Sura, قل يا ايها الكافرون ."

In view of the foregoing traditions the commentators have said that the word *Alkafirun*, in this Sura, refers to the particular unbelievers who came to see him in this connection.

As far as the question of unbeliever's presentation of certain proposals to the Holy Prophet is concerned there is no doubt that it is proved not only by *Ahadis* but certain historical evidence can also be found to support it. And a certain continuity is found in its recital. But as far as the question of the revealation of this Sura for this specific purpose is concerned, it is both questionable as well as doubtful.

For example, we take up the last three of the above quoted traditions. In all these traditions it is said that 'you worship our gods for a year and we will worship your God for one year', or as in the traditions related by Saeed bin Manya and Ibni Abbas the unbelievers did not mention the period of a year but only said

that 'you worship our Gods and we will worship your God'.

There is nothing strange in such a proposal coming from the mouth of an unbeliever. For when one says something unreasonable and also sees that it is not proving effective and people are forsaking his views and beliefs then he is apt to say such unreasonable things. But here we are only concerned with the question whether the Sura under discussion was revealed in answer to these proposals or whether there was any real need of revealing such a Sura or is it reasonable to suppose that a Sura would be revealed in response to such demands. As far as the first question is concerned it must be noted that this tradition is not mentioned in any of the *Sihah*. It seems strange that such an important event that unbelievers put a question to the Holy Prophet and a Sura is revealed in answer to it, is not mentioned in any of the *Sihah*.

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As far as the question that was there any justification of revealing a Sura in answer to these demands is concerned it can also be answered clearly. Unity of God is something which was mentioned in the very first revelations of the Holy Prophet. For instance, the first Sura revealed to him, though does not mention the unity of God in words but it does refer to the worship of One God. It says:

اقرا باسم ربك الذى خلق - خلق الانسان من علق - اقرا

و ربك الاكرم - الذى علم بالقلم - علم الانسان مالم يعلم-

"Convey thou in the name of thy Lord Who created; Created man from a clot of blood; Convey! And thy Lord is Most Generous; Who taught *man* by the pen; Taught man what he knew not." (Ch. 96 : 2-6)

Firstly, it indicates the fact of God being perfect.

Secondly, it says that God alone has been guiding the mankind to the right path through His revelations.

Thirdly, it says that there is such knowledge in the word of God which can only be found through Divine help and no man can attain to it through his own efforts.

The teachings contained in this Sura refute the theory of ascribing partners to God. For, when God alone has been teaching mankind through His Prophets and when perfect teachings can come only from Him then no place is left for any idols in such a spiritual system.

Sura Muzzammil and Sura Muddaththir were revealed soon after this. In Sura Muzzammil Allah says :

رب المشرق والمغرب لا اله الا هو فاتخذه وكيلا

"He is the Lord of the East and the West ; there is no God but He ; so take Him as thy Guardian". (73 : 10)

Again He says in Sura Muddaththir :

و ربك فكبر. . . . . و الرجز فاهجر

"And thy Lord do thou magnify . . . . . And *shirk* do thou shun". (74 : 4, 6)

After this clear declaration that says ; "There is only one God Who is the Lord of East and West and there is none besides Him' and that urges mankind to reject *shirk* and proclaim the greatnese of God and to trust in Him alone, what was the need of revealing another Sura in answer to such demands ?

Again, for the last four years, the Holy Prophet, had been practicing worship of one God, his main teaching was that God is one and there is none besides Him worthy to be worshipped. This was the main point of difference with the Meccans. In the presence of all these things how it can be reasonably said that when the unbelievers put this question to the Holy Prophet, he asked God's guidance in this matter and then God revealed this sura and told him not to worship gods of the unbelievers.

Can anyone believe in this story that if some Christian says to an ordinary Muslim : 'Come, worship Jesus and we will

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worship your God' and the Muslim answers : 'I can reply only when I have asked the opinion of *ulema'*. If even an ordinary ignorant Muslim cannot give such an answer then how it can be believed that the Holy Prophet who was the most wise among the mankind and who proclaimed absolute unity of God could need God's guidance for answering the question put by the unbelievers or that even four years after his ministry he did need such a guidance. I do not consider the demand itself to be strange. A defeated nation in its confusion does many foolish things. I only think this to be unreasonable that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, could show any hesitation or that he waited for a divine answer when this demand was put to him. On my part, I cannot believe that any reasonable person can accept it even for a minute. Because this is a question which has been already answered in the Quran.

In addition to this basic objection to the theory many other objections can also be raised against it. For instance, the demand of the unbelievers was that if the Holy Prophet started worshipping their gods they will worship his God. In other words he was asked to worship gods whom he did not recognize as worthy to be worshipped and in return they offered to worship God whom they also already worshipped. For, this is an historical fact that the Quraish of Mecca believed in God as the Muslims did and He was taken to be the Supreme God. The difference between the Meccans and the Muslims lay not in their worship of One God but in that the Meccans also worshipped a few other idols besides Him as semi-gods sent by Him. Viewed in this background the demands of Quraish of Mecca seem not only against the faith and religion of the Muslims but also against the dictates of reason. In the Holy Quran God says :

والذين اتخذو من دونه اولياء ما نعبدهم الا

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يقربونا الى الله زلفى

"And those who take for protectors others beside Him say, 'We serve them only that they may

bring us near to Allah in Stations'. (39 : 4)

The verse clearly says that the Meccans believed in One Supreme God and in His being Lord of the Universe. They worshipped idols because in their view, they were dear ones of God and would grant them nearness to Him and would act as their intercessor with Him.

So when the Quraish of Mecca believed in God Almighty, thought nearness to Him as essential for mankind and worshipped false gods only as a means to attain that nearness, then how can it be said that they did not worship God. And if they did worship Him then their demand that if the Muslims worshipped false idols they would also worship God is a foolish demand. Belief in God was common to the Muslims and the Meccans. The difference lay in the worship of false gods. To demand from the Holy Prophet to accept something which was the real cause of difference and in return to accept something in which they already believed is, to say the least, unreasonable and foolish.

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The demand of Quraish, as related in the *Ahadis* was such which was already decided upon in the Holy Quran. Moreover, it was so unreasonable that there was no need of any new revelation for this. Even an ordinary follower of the Holy Prophet could have answered it. Therefore, is seems probable that though the unbelievers might have made this foolish demand from the Holy Prophet but in answer he could never have said that because of thc importance of the question he would have to seek God's guidance on this point to answer it. And it is also nor possible to suppose that God would have revealed a Sura containing the basic teachings of Islam which was being presented for the last four years by the Muslims and for which many Muslim men and women have given their lives, merely in reply to such a foolish demand of the Meccans.

(To be continued)

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EDUCATION AND THE HOLY QURAN

(A speech delivered by Maulvi F. Ilahi Anwari, before a gathering of Educationists in Lagos, Nigeria)

Education in the modern world exposes a number of questions before us.

(a) What does education really mean ?

(b) What is the importance of education for a Muslim ?

(c) How can we educate a Muslim in the present world of materialism, and

(d) What are the obstacles in the way of Muslim education and how can we overcome them ?

I take these questions one by one.

WHAT DOES EDUCATION REALLY MEAN

Education is acquiring of knowledge and is something of positive character, and being so, it stands in contrast with two words : Ignorance and Illiteracy. The UMMI (امی) used in the Holy Quran stands for illiterate or unlettered, and the word (JAHIL) (جاہل) is used to denote ignorance. Education aims at eradicating botn ignorance and illiteracy, and thus means acquiring knowledge of certain unknown values and realities of nature, technically termed as History, Geography, Mathematics, Science, etc, and at the same time the word 'education' implies the realisation of that sublime light which penetrates through the remote past and brings to light secrets of the heaven and the earth ; the light that ascends into the Invincible future and reflects back news and views still unheard and unseen by any human being on earth.

The Holy Prophet, for instance, though unlettered, was not ignorant : a fact well established on the authority of the

book he brought. The narration of many past events in the Holy Quran with high degree of accuracy, the countless prophecies about the Future which came out and are still coming out to be true and the description of many scientific realities by the Holy Quran long before they were discovered by Science provide irresistable evidence to the high quality education of this unlettered Prophet, Muhammad (May peace and blessings of God be upon him).

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Abul Hikm, the arch-enemy of the Prophet Mohammad, popularly known as Abu Jahl, was, on the other hand, ignorant, even the father of ignorance, as his title implies, having been devoid of every sense to realise the truth.

Real education is thus meant to impart right kind of knowledge and the right kind of knowledge in the Quranic interpretation is that which leads man towards the recognition of his Creator, the Almighty God. Again, real education is that which brings about absolute peace and harmony in the society by maintaining right kind of relation and co-ordination among the human individuals, and by giving due rights to all organs of the society.

Similarly a person whose dealing with his fellow-beings are not based on sincerity, love and self-sacrifice but on hypocracy, hatered and selfishness, may not be termed an educated man, whatever high degrees and academic qualifications he might possess.

Real education is thus a search light which comes from On-High and illumates both heart and soul, enlightens the brain and purges the mind of all selfish desires and evil tendencies.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION FOR A MUSLIM

Having so defined 'Education' it is very easy for us to bring out the importance of proper education. Islam is the re-

ligion which has stressed the Unity of God and faith in His eternal Existence more than any other religion. This gives a Muslim the first right to acquire such knowledge as may be useful and helpful to realise fully the Creator. That is why the great founder of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم laid it as a duty upon every Muslim to educate himself or herself, as the Hadith implies :

> "Acquiring of knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim man and Muslim woman."

It was on account of this mandatory injunction that the Muslim Califs appointed learned men all over the Muslim world to educate people. Mosques were being used as educational centres. They first began mainly with the Holy Quran and teachines of Islam but later introduced other branches of knowledge too. The Umayyed Califs, for instance, took interest in science. The great Muslim poet and explorer of the 5th century Hijra, Nasir Khusroe writes that the mosque at Cairo was daily visited by about five thousand men to hear lectures on various subjects including literature, theology, philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, physics, medicine, astronomy, astrology etc. At this time people of Europe were yet lying in sheer ignorance and sloth.

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During the reign of Harun-al-Rashid and his son a large number of richly endowed schools were opened, a university was founded, libraries were established and an observatory was set up. The Abbasid Calif, Mamun, founded an academy named Baitul-Hikmat. The Fatimid Califs founded one in Cairo. Each of these contained a library, an observatory and a dwelling for students with a medical college attached.

So education is the right of a Muslim. It is his lost property. It was given to him through the great heritage left for him by his spiritual father, the highly educated man ever existed on earth, by the unlettered Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be on him). The knowledge he brought gushed

forth like a great fountain first in Mecca and Medina. Then it flowed over the desert of Arabia into the fertile soils of the Middle eastern countries, and, then crossing many Asian and European countries, reached the remote end of China. All the greatest academic centres of the Middle Ages, like Baghdad, Bukhara, Demascus and Cairo as enumerated above owe their entire fame to their fountain-head in the Arabian desert. But it was soon lost from the Muslims and fell like a boon from heaven into the hands of their greatest rivals, who after applying on it another label, began to sell it to its owners - the Muslims, in exchange of their wealth, honour, and their faith.

Knowledge is thus the lost property of a Muslim, as said by the Holy Prophet Muhammad الحكمة ضالة المؤمن i.e. Knowledge and Wisdom are the lost property of a believer.

Let us hasten to recover it from wherever we find. A seeker after knowledge is so dear to God, says again the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the Angels spread their wings under his feet and pray for him.

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HOW CAN WE EDUCATE MUSLIMS

Coming to the third question : how we can educate a Muslim in the present world of materialism, I would say : in the same way as they were educated in the time of early Islam. How effective this education was and what enormous strength did it bestow on them can be well understood by an event which took place in the court of the King of Persia, one of the two mightiest empires at the time of the advent of Islam (the other being the Roman Empire). When the Muslim army, in the time of Umar, the Great, had entered Persia defeating the Persian army, the King sent for a Muslim delegation in order to know what the Muslims really wanted. Wearing long shirts the Muslim delegation entered the royal court. The Persian monarch addressed them in an insulting tone asking :

"You Arabs, the eater of bones and filthy animals,

how have you the courage to attack my country ?"

The leader of the Muslim delegation, a Sahabi, responded to the Kings speech as follows ;

> "Yes, O King, you are right to say we were eater of bones and filthy animals. We were indulgent in many evil habits. But now a Prophet of God has appeared among us. He has brought knowledge and heavenly guidance. We are no more uncivilized and uncultured. We are now torch-bearers of a great civilization. If you accept the truth you and your country will be saved."

The King who had underestimated the enormous strength of the Muslims so far, proposed to give one guinea to each Muslim soldier. The delegation, however, turned down the offer, saying : "We are not after money O King."

The King, naturally full of anger, ordered for a sack of dust to be brought and gave a handful of dust to each of the delegates, saying :

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> "You don't deserve except this from me."

The leader of the delegation carried the dust and whispered to his companions to run out of the court. They were saying :

> "Lo ! The King has handed himself his own land to us."

The Persian empire fell, shortly after into the hands of the Muslim army.

The people of Arabia were at that time much less powerful and much smaller in number than the Muslims of today are with respect to their non-Muslim contemporaries. But despite all this they became the greatest ruling power of the world within the quarter of a century. It was because the school they attended was of much higher educational standard

than those of our time; the lesson they were taught was of nobler character than what is taught in todays' schools, and, the teacher at whose feet they learnt was, though illiterate, much greater in knowledge than even the most highly educated and skilled teacher of our time. What he taught and how he taught is very beautifully summarised in the opening verses of Sura Jumma :

> "He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance. And among others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise." (62 : 3 - 4)

The first lesson was the narration of verses of Allah. The Prophet first narrated to them verses describing the glory of their Lord, His immence Love and Grace, His overwhelming Mercy and Forgiveness, His unique Charm and beauty, in such a beautiful way that they fell in love with Him, and were prepared to part away with every dearest possession for His sake.

History tells us in what great esteem did the early Muslims hold the Quran. They learnt each and every word of it by heart. They repeated and recited it day and night. They gave their lives for it. They used to weep while reading it. Abu Bakr, the first Muslim Khalifa, while still in Mecca, was warned by a Meccan Chief to stop weeping while reciting the Quran. But Abu Bakr would not stop even though his life was threatened.

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Nobody would be unaware of how Umar, the Great had undergone a complete change simply on hearing the inspiring verses of the Holy Quran. With blood in eyes and with a sword in hand he was going to kill the Prophet of Allah, when on the way, he learnt that her sister had also accepted Islam. Wishing to do away with her first, he went to her house where

she, her husband and another Sahabi were reciting the Holy Quran. Wild with anger he jumped upon the three unarmed Muslims and wounded them. Seeing his sister soaked in blood, he felt a little ashmed and demanded them to read out to nim the same. The courageous sister cried : "You infidel can never listen to the word of God unless you take a bath." Umar whose anger was now replaced by shame complied with his sisters order. When the holy verses were read upon him, Umar was no more an infidel. The divine word, had already done its work. Umar returned from his sister's house, now a completely different man—a believer and a faithful.

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Poetry was a very favourite hobby among the Arabs. A Sahabi who before accepting Islam was a very popular poet was once asksd why he had stopped making poems. He answered :

> "The beauty and charm of the verses of the Holy Quran are enough to cause me to forget everything else."

The second lesson they took at the hand of their beloved Master was that of purification : و یزکیھم

"And he purified them", both bodily and spiritually. The condition of the Arabs before Islam was of the ugliest. They used to bury alive their daughters. They treated their wives worse than an animal, they ate filthy animals, and they were dead drunkards, they worshipped idols, waged wars out of no reasons, which lasted years together. Human life meant nothing to them when their false pride was at stake. Drinking, merry - making and women were their popular pastimes. All these shameful practices were wiped out with one stroke, as it were, the moment they had the first lesson of purification. A female companion of the Holy Prophet, a newly married Sahabia, still in her wedding garments, pushed her husband away from her, saying "Don't you feel ashamed. The Prophet of Allah is away in the battle-field and you think of your wife. Go, first help the Prophet and then

touch me." This was the first and the last time that the bride and the bridegroom saw each other. The bridegroom never returned as he had given his life while fighting in the way of Allah.

Like this Sahabia, the life of each and every companion of the Holy Prophet is an everlasting symbol of purification. Some of them were even prepared to lead a life of celibacy if only the Prophet would permit them. These were the Sahabas who before Islam spent days and nights together in the company of beautiful women, wrote lengthy poems in their praise which were recited in traditional gatherings. Now their only favourite hobby was to praise their Lord day and night. The Holy Prophet had completely changed them.

After the Sahabas had undergone a throngh purification under able guidance and leadership of their Master they took the third lesson. Now they were taught social and moral laws. The word الكتاب here stands for 'code of laws'. So they were taught their rights and obligations, their duties and responsibities towards their parents, children, relatives, friends, country-men, mankind and above all, towards their Creator. They were taught what was lawful and what was unlawful for them. How effectively this lesson was carried out by them is evident from the fact that the day the absolute prohibition of wine and other alcoholic drinks was revealed to the Holy Prophet a company of Sahabas was sitting together, with bowls in their hands and the container in the the middle, ready to drink, when they heard some one crying :

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> "O, ye who believe ! wine and the game of hazard and idols and divining arrrows are only an abomination of satan's handwork. So shun each of them that you may prosper." (The Holy Quran 5 : 91)

It was the voice of a Sahabi who was sent by the Holy Prophet to announce in the streets of Medina the divine command. No sooner did this company of Sahabas hear it then

they threw the bowls away, spilted the wine and broke the container. One of them suggested to ascertain the news before breaking the pots. Others rejected the proposal vehemently saying: "Now that we have heard it we shall first break the pots and then ascertain the news."

Once the wine was anounced unlawful they never touched a single drop of it again. It is narrated that on that day wine flowed like water in the streets of Medina.

The same was the case with almost every heavenly command they received. The Muslims were given through the Holy Quran a complete code of life which they carried out even to the minute details with full sincerity of heart and pleasure of mind. A Sahabi was seen wearing a ring of gold. The Holy Prophet took the ring off his hand and said: "Allah has forbidden men to wear gold."

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When the Holy Prophet went away some one suggested to this Sahabi to pick up his ring and sell it away. He said, "Should I pick up the ring which has been thrown away by the Holy Prophet." No police force could have a stronger or more lasting effect than the simple words of Prophet had on his devoted followers. For them it was enongh that the command was from God. For them it sufficed that Holy Prophet had said this. The Holy Quran had become a practical book for them. The words of the Prophet were moulded into actions by them. They lived in the Holy Quran. They acted upon by its teachings.

There came now the turn of the fourth lesson, the last lesson of the series: they were taught the philosophy of the Islamic Teachings.

They were given to undestand, for instance, what is the purpose of their life, what death, Resurrection and life after death actually mean, what are the functions of body and soul; what enourmous talents have been given to man and how he

can employ them to attain to to the goal of his life, what revelation is, and so on.

After they had gone through the first three lessons of the series it was no more diffleult for the divivine pupils of the Islamic school of thought to understand their new lesson - a lesson which has never been understood so far even by the greatest philosopher or scholar of the secular world not even its rudiments. Just imagine for example, a philosopher meets a Baduin of Arabia, and asks him if he believes in God. The Baduin, a simple illiterate camel driver, smiles at the question and nods his head in firm affirmative, wondering at the ignorance of the stranger, who on his turn asks him again in great misgiving if he has got any proof of that. The Baduin wondered again at the absurdity of the question as if he were asked to tell some one in the presence of day-light whether the sun was shining. He returned to the philosopher, saying :

البعر تدل على البعير و آثار القــدم على السفير فالسماوات ذات البروج و الارض ذات الفجاج الاتدل على العـالم الخبير

"The camel-dung lets us know of the camel ; and the footprings lets us know of the wayfarer. Why not, then, the heaven with its stars and milky ways, and the earth with its mountains and occeans make us believe in the existence of the All-knowing, All-Aware."

The deeper philosophy of Islam is even more difficult to be grasp by the so called learned and educated materialists. Revelation, for instance is a very simple and comprehensable experience for a believer and there have been, and still are, hundreds of thousands among the Muslims to have had such experience. European philosophers and thinkers have taken every pain to prove the contrary. Their efforts are limited to the outward laws of nature. They have employed reason only to explore the secrets of the heaven and the earth, and they have failed. That is because they are unaware of the secret divine laws which control the universe. Revelation

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is governed by and is a product of the secret divine laws and can never be discovered by means of any reason or physical laws. And as they could not prove the existence of any supernatural being by reasons and by laws governing the matter only they denied the very existence of God, the Creator. That is the reason why a Greek philosopher, committed himself to the folly of making an offering to an idol, while no such error is recorded of any Muslim philosopher, because the latter is a pupil of Muhammad, the unlettered genuis the world has ever known.

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And that's why the materialistic Europe is fast advancing towards a state which is in no way better than atheism. Although Muslims have forgotten most of the teachings of Islam, they have, however, never forgotten the one lesson they had with their master even though 1400 years have elapsed, namely, that God exists. They dominated the world so long as they kept and firmly held (العروة الوثقى) the strong handle. But when they let those the divine rod, the rod of their glory, fame and majesty, they were defeated by their opponents. They can regain their lost power and honour, their lost academic supermacy and even their political might, only if they realise their great mistake; only if they are prepared to revise their long forgotten lesson. The early Muslims were not educated in any university, nor were they in possesion of high academic degrees, yet they overcame their civilized opponents. Their whole might came from On High. History provides us a very beautiful evidence to this effect. When in the time of Umar, the Great, the Muslim army was gaining ground and winning victory after victory, the commander of the Romans asked his minister: "how these Baduins of Arabia with much fewer army and with much poorer equipment are able to defeat our highly strong army." The minister was a sensible man. He said: "O King, I know only one reason. These Baduins fight in the day but when the night falls they line up before their Lord and implore for help." The Christian minister was right. The source of the

entire might of the Muslims was their Lord, the All mighty God.

That Lord Who made Muslims victorious in the most adverse circumstances is still Living and is Ever-Lasting, only if the Muslims are prepared to invoke His help through the Prayer, this being the last will of His Messenger, the Prophet Mohammad, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him.

Before ending my speech I would like to remind my worthy listeners that the verses I have referred to are the opening verses of Sura Jumma. This Surah Jumma constitutes a great prophecy, concerning the second advent of Islam, which was to be achieved through a Promised Follower of the Holy Prophet as the words imply :

> 'And among others from among them who have not yet joined them, that is to say, the formidable work which was accomplished by the Holy Prophet in four distinct stages and which brought enormous spiritual wealth and material glory to the 'Umuiyyin' the early Muslims, was going to be undertaken again by a true follower of Muhammad appearing afterwards. These 'Aakh'rin'. The Others, as has been affirmed by various evidences from the Hadith are our own generation. The verse under question has an indirect indication to the effect that in the weak days of Islam when Muslims will be pressed and humiliated from all directions and in all fields, the only way out for them will be to walk on the same lines and undertake the same means and measures as were adopted by their predecessors, the Ummiyyin, the unlettered.

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I may venture to tell my worthy listeners that the Promised Follower has also appeared to accompalish this work. He is Hazrat Ahmad of Qadian, the Founder of the World-wide Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, peace be on him. Let me quote him to end the speech : He says :

"When Almighty God saw that the world was steeped

in iniquities, transgressions and errors, He raised me to draw it from this state of degradation and commanded me to preach the truth and reclaim the world from the evils into which it had fallen. So, exactly at the time when the thirteenth century of Hijra had come to a close and the world had entered upon the fourteenth century, I announced my mission in obedience to the Divine Commandment and made it known to the people through my words and writings that I was the Reformer, promised to appear at the commencement of the fourteenth century for the reformation of the faith, so that I should reestablish upon the earth the faith which had vanished from its face, and that being strengthened by God, I might draw the world by the powerful attraction of His hand to true virtue, piety and righteousness and remove the prevailing errors in doctrine and practice."

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و آخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين ـ

Our God, a Living and Loving God

English rendering of a sermon of the Khalifatul Masih III delivered on June 7, 1968, at Rabwah.

The Promised Messiah (blessings and peace on him) has said "Untill one observe the manifestation of the living powers of the Living God, satan does not depart from his heart, nor does faith in true Unity of God enter it and nor does he believe with certainty in the person of God."

The observation of the living powers of the Living God is possible only through the manifestations of the attributes of the Holy Being. Perfect knowledge of Divine attributes that have revelance to man has been imparted to us by Allah through the Holy Quran. Of these four are source attributes; that is, they are basic attributes as related in Sura Fatiha—Rabb (Providence), Rahman (Gracious), Rahim (Compassionate) Malik-i-Yaumiddin (Master of the day of Requittal). At the moment I propose to make a brief reference to two of these attributes —Rahman and Rahim.

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Rahman and Rahim

We find expressions (basically) of the attributive name Rahman in two shapes. One form covers the commands and laws that were enforced by God the supreme in the Universe before our birth for the purpose of benefitting man through their end-results. As for instance, Allah created air for our survival before our existence and without reference to any effort on our part but for the manifestation of His attribute of *Rahmaniyyat* (Graciousness) so that we may breathe and live. He made the sun for our food requirements and for satisfaction of the demands

of our physical organism and hitched it to the world in a special manner. The sun and earth equation creates day and night which leads the providence that covers our comfort and our activity. If night were a 12—month round course man would have failed to make material achievements that he has attained and will continue to accumulate. Also because most of the assignments are carried out with the help of light, light or for that matter, rays of the sun play on immense role in our progress. For instance, in the development of scientific thought in as much our planet gains great vital forces through sunbeams, leading to advancement of agronomics which has been considerable and shall continue to grow in the future. If cold had grown in intensity in perpetual darkness, man would have faced great hardship in doing any kind of work, and if the sun stayed up all the year round, earth would have been reduced to cinders, that is to say most of its resources would have died away and man would have not been able to derive benefits from it. Besides it would have become hard for him to find relaxation and this planet would have become unfit for human habitation and totally desolate. In short, God created innumerable objects and elements and stars that are far away from us and resources that are deposited in the earth so that man may make both physical and spiritual progress. For, the night that follows the day, provides means for attainment of nearness to God, to the point of praise. Had there been a 12—month round daylight period, man would have found it hard to reach this admirable (Mahmud) stage.

In short, these are the objects that the Rahman (Gracious) God created before our existence, even before the birth of mankind, in His perfect knowledge and perfect Mercy, for the benefit of man.

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The other phase of grace

There are yet other expressions of the attribute of graciousness (Rahmaniyat) which we see from minute to minute and hour to hour. I will revert to this part later. Presently I will take up Rahimiyyat (Compassion of God). This is a truth that

the Rahimiyyat of God infuses blessing in our plans. The Promised Messiah (blessing and peace be on him) has told us in a very charming manner that planning is also a sort of prayer and when a mundane plan reaches its ultimate point and we feel that the rules laid down by God the Excellent, in respect of temporal planing and the principles enforced by Him in this respect have been worked out by us to their perfection, the heart of a faithful believer feels that he still stands in need of his Compassionate (Rahim) Creator and he sends up the petition to the Merciful God, to make his plans worthy of results. So far as a believer is concerned, his planning is never complete unless prayer is made its necessary ingredient. Humble and impassioned appeals have thus a special affinity to Rahimiyyat. If they are absent man becomes a polytheist. Should he feel that mundane planning is about all that is required of him, and the grace and mercy of God are redundant, he is virtually a rejector of One God. In the Holy Quran, Allah speaks of a people who have neither faith in Him nor knowledge of Him but He grants them success and provisions of this life, making their worldly plans fruitful, for (the simple fact that) an element of prayer is inherent in effort and struggle. A believer however does not rest content with the feeling that he devised a measure and the Compassion (Rahimiyyat) of God blessed it in this life but it did not bear any fruit for him in the hereafter. For a believer knows that the hereafter is a certainty and life is a continuing chain and death is but a curtain whih is lowered (temporarily) and is raised eventually when man crosses the threshold to the next life. Obviously untill he attains to the certitude that his life is a continuity under the shadow of God's mercy, he never enjoys true tranquility.

Prayer part of Plan

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Prayer is an essential part of every plan—We devise a measure in material terms and we devise yet another through prayer. When a scheme is laid out involving the gifts of God

and in conformity to His laws, His grace attends the believer in so much as he meets success in this life as well as earns favour in the next. But those who dedicate all their efforts to pursuit of gain in this life and devote their lives entirely to the attainment of temporal objectives, who have altogether forgotten their Creator and neither sought of Him nor received from Him any good, they receive mundane benefits through His compassion (Rahimiyyat) according to the size of their material measures. We witness kindred manifestations of God's compassion in this behalf everyday. In short, some receive from the Compassionate (Rahim) God only worldly benefits in terms of His Promise and there are others who receive from their Merciful (Rahim) Lord advantages in this life as well as in the next, for, they are entrenched in the belief that whatever they want they can definitely have from Him.

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Expressions of Rahmaniyyat

We find manifestations of God's (Rahmaniyyat) in yet another shape. It so happens that some time all plans fail. At times, in fact there appears to be no way out. For instance there is the case of a patient. Physicians claim to have made out the diagnosis and pinpoint cancer as the malady. They use every kind of therapy known to the medical science for its efficacy—they try every branch of medicine from allopathy to homeopathy and even time-honoured popular remedies. But everything fails to bring about any improvement.

A patient in like condition consults top most physicians of the world. Thy are stumped and fail to make diagnosis. Only recently an Ahmadi friend Chaudhri Abdur-Rahman fell sick with fever in England. He had a similar attack before and had recovered. He again suflered from the some trouble. England is a higly advanced country. There are many specialists and excellent physicians there. He was kept in hospital for over a month. They could not make a diagnose of the disease. When one fails to locate the malady, treetment is any-

body's guess and in such a case no medicine can be prescribed. And When one can't specifically recommend a medicine, no measures in a material sense can be taken and thus the question of the manfestation of Rahmiyyat does not arise in such cases. That is possible only when planing has reached its maturity point.

Plans fail at times. Every angle is tried and yet no results appear.

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Failure of Plan

Many friends often write to say that they tried business and took pains but had no success and only suffered loss in every undertaking they handled and in every plan they made. An Ahmadi knows prayer is an inseparable part of planning the prayer that is a constitutent of efforts and is offered to invoke the compassion of God for the success of conventional planning had been tendered and still the odds stayed heavy. These are hard luck cases. They suffer great frustration and I share their grief. In such cases where planning fails or no alternative suggests itself, we should knock at the door of the Rahman (Gracious) God. When a malady is declared to be beyond cure and even prayers that are used as auxiliaries of mundane planning fail and from all hands it appears that fate is inexorable, if at that hour one humbles himself before the Rahman (Gracious) God addressing to Him the prayer "Our Lord - God Thou art both Compassionate (Rahim) and gracious (Rahman) It is our misfortune that failed to move thy Rahimiyyat (Compassion), now we bend ourselves before thy Rahmaniyyat (Graciouness). We made no effort and no plan. Thou created the sun, the moon and innumerable stars for our sustenance and welfare, Grace us this hour too with a manifestation of Thy graciousness and help us out."

In such cases of despair, oftener than not, the door of Divine grace is opened. Our Gracious (Rahman) God is living today with all His powers and might as He lived in the past.

Such a manifestation of Rahmaniyyat (Graciousness) of God was witnessed by Chaudhri Abdur Rahman in London. His doctors told him that they had failed to diagnose his ailment. God restored him to health. He is a tremendous worker. He devotes plenty of his time to the service of the Movement.

I know a number of friends who failed in business I know quite a few who faced misfortunes all their lives. They should turn into this direction, seek divine help through His Rahmaniyyat (Graciousness). For, if it is true, and it is true indeed, that man cannot count His blessings that He created in the shape of bounteous gifts and objects long before our birth and for our use without reference to any service or effort on our part, but only through His grace, one cannot, one dare not entertain the least doubt about His reaching out to him with His graciousness any time he is in need of Him in his life. For the graciousness of God is not limited to the past ; we see its manifestations in our daily life. Every man, at one time or the other in his life, feels that he has done his best in terms of planning and has failed. At that hour, he should turn to the Gracious (Rahman) God and those who so turn, the door is opened to them and they observe the manifestations of His graciousness (Rahmaniyyat).

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Road to firm faith

There is no way of attaining to firm faith in perfect Unity of God without (faith in) the living Powers of the Living God and living powers of the Living God find expression through His two attributes - Rahmaniyyat and Rahimiyyat. Rahimiyyat lays on us the obligation that all the material means God has created for producing certain results must be fully utilized and currently we should have recourse to spiritual means and thus mature our planning, for, unless a plan reaches the stage of perfection, it proves fruitless. When planning is carried to its final phase, men experiences a manifestation of Rahimiyyat (Compassion) of God and scores his point. A materialist who

has no faith in God sees this manifestation but unluckily for him, he does not appreciate it. He attributes his success to his own genius, blind to the fact that there are around him hundreds of people who who had likewise matured their plans but could not make it. For example, there are cases of hundreds of scientists engaged in the research in indentical fields and only one or two out of the whole lot come up with results. But the successful person seldom sees the failures around him and has all the time for complimenting himself.

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Knowledge of Compassionate God

Manifestations of God's Rahimiyyat (Compassion) are an everyday experience of the believers. Some chores take twenty minutes and some an hour and some hours. If a house wife has prepared the dinner and believes that since the job has been done she no more needs the compassion of God she is mistaken. In order to teach her a lesson, God might intervene. When she is eagerly looking forward to serving a favourite dish to her ch ldren and her husband, a child runs in and upsets the food-container.

The disbeliever will call it an accident. The beliver will say *Astaghfirullah* I Seek the forgiveness of Allah. I must have made a mistake. The mercy of God did not form part of my plan.

In this manner God teaches us a lesson—unless His compassionate care becomes an ingredient of the human planning, no results can be expected.

We see sometime in our own lives and in our surroundings, situations when no way seems to suggest itself out and we are stuck. At times all plans miscarry. God wants to remind man in this manner that if he cares to win His mercy, he should apprach Him through the channel of Rahmaniyyat. He shuts on him the appraoches to His other attributes. Such a person should bow down to the Rahman (Gracious) God and

the prayer made at that hour will not infact be a part of human planning ; on the contrary it will be a confession of the subject's utter helplessness. Man here moves over to the door of the Gracious (Rehman) God and says:

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> "I have offered prayers. I have tried plans. Failure has caught up with me. I have turned to Thee, O Gracious Lord ! Show a manifestation of Rahmaniyyat as Thou didst before.....Grant me (Succcess) without reference to any merit of mine, O Gracious Lord" !

There are many who witness expressions of God's graciousness. We daily experience the twin expressions of Rahimiyyat and Rahmaniyyat in our lives, in our families, in our world where we are passing our days. We witness the living signs of the Living God and those who are so vouchsafed the spectacle of the manifestations of Divine attributes, they alone enjoy a firmly entranched faith in the pure Unity of God and are His true devotees and obedient dedicates. May God, the Excellent, be pleased to perfect the faith of all our menfolk and womenfolk in true Unity and may He grant us tho power to see and appreciate the manifestations of His love and care and beauty and bounty that He ever unveils before us ! Amen !

OUR ILLUSORY WORLD

Bashir Ahmad Orchard

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انه صرح ممرد من قواريو

"It is a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass."
(Quran ; 27 : 45)

Belief in life after death is a basic teaching of Islam. The Quran contains abundant passages on the subject. Denial of the Hereafter deviates a person from the Right Path :

و ان الذين لا يؤمنون بالاخرة عن الصراط لنكبون

"And those who believe not in the Hereafter, are indeed deviating from that path."
(Quran 23 : 75)

It is unfortunate that many people give insufficient care and attention to the preparation of their souls for the next life and it is even more unfortunate that there are numerous people who do not believe in life after death at all. They are unable to conceive of any other kind of existence than life on this planet. They are prepared to believe only in what is apparent to them through the aid of their phyisical senses - sight, touch, smell, hearing and taste.

God says in the Holy Quran that a believer is one who believes in the unseen (2 : 4). This is not a blind belief but one which is upheld by scriptural authority and confirmed by personal experience.

Those who hold the view that this universe and all things in it are composed of solid substance are under an illusion. We propose to show that this world and all that is in it is

not really as it appears. There is no such thing as matter in the understood sense of the word. When this great truth is understood then the existence and nature of life after death is no longer a stumbling block. This world is a spiritual realm as is also the next one but their states are different.

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Analysis of Matter

A pilot flying above a beach sees below him a golden strip stretching along the coastline. Close inspection reveals that what he sees is a mass of tiny grains of sand. Microscopic inspection shows that each grain of sand is composed of innumerable atoms which are so small that a million times a million of them would not make a lump large enough to be seen by the human eye. Chemists had thought that the atom was the smallest particle but now it is known that the atom itself is composed of even smaller sub-atomic-particles known as electrons, and protons.

All things are made of atoms and each one is practically all empty space. The protons and neutrons form its necleus. The electrons which vary in number in different kinds of atoms revolve around the nucleus at great speed as the planets of our solar system revolve around the sun. Indeed every atom is a miniature solar system floating in space. Keeping in mind the size of an atom the distances separating the electrons from the central nucleus have been compared to the distances seperating the planets from the sun.

There is no wonder that radio waves, x-rays and other kinds of rays can pass through the hardest rock or steel. Switch on a radio, seal it in a trunk and it will continue to play. The waves pass through the steel as easily as anapparition passes through the door of a room.

Almost all of solid matter is empty space in which not one atom or sub-particle is touching another. Our sense of

vision is extremely restricted and what we are able to see around us is different to what it seems. We live in an illusory world.

Howbeit, matter - as we call it - does exist. What is matter ? Whence from has it come ?

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Matter is Energy

There exists the law of cause and effect. Something cannot come from nothing. This is a self evident truth. Islam teaches that God is the Original Cause of all things. He is Unique in as much as He has no beginning or end. He is the Creator of all things :

و هو الخلق العليم

"He is indeed the Supreme Creator, The All-Knowing." (Quran : 36 : 82)

هو الله الذى الخالق البارى المصور

"He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner." (Quran (59 : 25)

There arises the question whether matter was created in one direct stroke by God or did it evolve from immaterial forces which already existed in the great void ?

Einstein (1819 - 1955) is the greatest name in mathematical physics in the twentieth century. He proved that matter and energy are one and the same thing in different forms. Both are itnerchangeable. Mater has been converted into energy and energy has also been converted into matter.

Energy was present before the creation of matter which is a manifestation of that energy from which it evolved.

Thought is intangible energy which lay behind the creation of the universe and all the multifarious and intricate systems and creations within it. In the human and animal king-

dom thought-energy demonstrates its power through the brain.

Scientists have built apparatus which can chart the vibrations of thought energy emanating from the brain.

Thought energy and other kinds of energy existed prior to the creation of the universe ; and some of that energy has became concentrated into matter.

We live in an ethereal world and when this truth is grasped then the existence of a higher ethereal world called the Hereafter lies within reason.

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Creative Vibrations

We have seen that the myriad orbs which adorn the heavens are embodiments of energy from which they originally evolved ; and that matter and energy are no more than one and the same of thing in different guise.

Energy vibrates on different frequencies and wave lengths. The whole universe is composed of one gigantic net work of vibrations. Different kinds of energy vibrate on different frequencies producing their effects accordingly. The next world is as real as this world with the difference that it functions on different levels of vibration to those on which this world functions. This will be clarified as we proceed.

While we are bound to this planet our senses are tuned only to the vibrations of this universe. We are unaware of the nature and conditions of the next world which vibrates on frequencies beyond the ability of our senses to pick up and interpret. God says in Holy Quran :

فلا تعلم نفس ما اخفى لهم من قرة اعين

جزاء بما كانوا يعلمون

"And no soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden from them as a reward for their good deeds." (Quran 32 : 18)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) has said :

> "They are such as the eye has not seen them, the ear has not heard of them and the mind cannot conceive of them."

The television set which has been designed to pick up certain channels only is unable to show on its screen the programmes on other channels. Similarly our senses are limited in their performances and are unable to view worlds operating on frequencies for which they have not been designed to observe or comprehend.

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We are conscious of vibrations within a fixed range of frequencies. The human ear, for example, is able to hear sound frequencies which vibrate only from twenty thousand cycles per second. It is deaf to all sound vibrations oscillating beyond the extremes of this range.

Bats emit a shrill ultra squeak which we cannot hear. These squeaks serve as a kind of radar whereby the bat listens for echoes bouncing back from any object in its path thereby enabling it to avoid collision.

There is the silent dog whistle. The owner who blows it hears nothing ; but its ultra high notes are heard by the dog which will respond to the call.

All kinds of activity is going on around us in the silent and invisible unknown. Our physical senses are deaf and blind to them. Sometimes, however, through the latent power of extra-sensory-perception we are able to perceive and learn some of these veiled mysteries.

Light is a wave motion. Every colour is a series of vibrations. The vibrations are conveyed through the eye to the brain where they are converted into the respective colours they represent. A prism will break up a ray of white light into the seven colours of the rainbow—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. These seven colours are called the spectrum.

All other visible colours can be made through the mixing of various colours in the spectrum. However, there are some colours which the eye cannot see because their rates of vibration are beyond the power of the eye to absorb. These known invisible light rays are ultra violet and infra red. They have been discovered by the spectrascope which is an instrument for studying the spectrum. It has been claimed that the seven perceived colours within the spectrum are infinitissimal with the unperceived ones.

All around us vibrates the great unknown and different kinds of creation to which our normal senses are insensible.

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All praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds.

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